

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 ACDA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 /088 W

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R 031530Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7801

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

EUCOM

UNCLAS ANKARA 0969

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR PINT GR TU CY

SUBJECT: PRIMIN IRMAK'S COMMENTS ON AEGEAN AND
GOVERNMENT CRISIS

REF: ANKARA 898

1. PRIMIN SADI IRMAK, FOLLOWING HIS WEEKLY MEETING WITH
PRESIDENT KORUTURK JANUARY 31, MET WITH THE PRESS AND COM-
MENTED ON AEGEAN ISSUE AND GOVERNMENT CRISIS.

A. SUBMISSION OF AEGEAN ISSUE TO ICJ: ASKED TO COMMENT
ON REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S PARTY'S STATEMENT FAVORING NEGOTIATIONS
BEFORE REFERRAL OF AEGEAN ISSUE TO ICJ, IRMAK SAID "...THE
PATH TO NEGOTIATION IS ALWAYS OPEN AND WE PREFER IT. BUT WE
ALSO BELIEVE THAT WE CANNOT REFRAIN FROM COMPLYING WITH THE
PROPOSAL TO GO JOINTLY TO THE COURT OF JUSTICE, BECAUSE WE ARE
SURE OF OUR RIGHTS." (RPP CHAIRMAN ECEVIT, IN INTERVIEW
PUBLISHED FEBRUARY 3, EXPLAINED THAT RPP DID NOT RULE OUT
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GOING TO ICJ BUT WANTED PRIOR BILATERAL DISCUSSION. "BUT I'AM

ON THE WHOLE INCLINED TO INTERPRET THE GREEK MOVE IN GOOD FAITH," HE SAID.)

B. SURVEY SHIP IN THE AEGEAN. IRMAK SAID THE NORWEGIAN VESSEL "LONGVA" WOULD BEGIN SURVEYS IN THE AEGEAN "DURING THE FIRST DAYS OF FEBRUARY." HE WENT ON TO SAY: "THERE IS NO STIPULATION THAT IT CAN MAKE SURVEYS ONLY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND NOT IN THE AEGEAN... WE WILL MAKE SURVEYS WHEREEVER WE HAVE THE RIGHT, ESPECIALLY IN THE AEGEAN." (COMMENT: PRIMIN DID NOT SPECIFICALLY ADDRESS ISSUE OF WHETHER VESSEL WOULD OPERATE IN DISPUTED AREAS.)

C. GOVERNMENT CRISIS. DECLINING TO SPEAK FOR THE PRESIDENT REGARDING THE FORMATION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT, IRMAK SAID IN HIS OWN VIEW THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT SHOULD REMAIN IN OFFICE AT LEAST UNTIL THE BUDGET HAS PASSED (CONSTITUTION REQUIRES APPROVAL BY THE END OF FEBRUARY). "...I EXPECT THE PRESIDENT WILL TAKE THE NECESSARY ACTION ABOUT THE FORMATION OF A GOVERNMENT AFTER THE BUDGET HAS BEEN LEGISLATED." IRMAK DENIED THAT THE COUNTRY FACES A "CONSTITUTIONAL" CRISIS AND SAID HIS CABINET WAS A LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT, ALTHOUGH IT LACKED A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE. WHILE ITS POWER WAS NOT AS BROAD AS THAT OF A NORMAL GOVERNMENT, IRMAK SAID HIS CABINET WOULD CONTINUE TO DO "WHAT IS GOOD FOR THE COUNTRY AND WHAT IT WOULD BE HARMFUL TO DELAY."

2. TWO LEADING DAILIES (CUMHURIYET AND GUNAYDIN) REPORTED FEBRUARY 1 THAT IRMAK HAD TOLD A RECENT MEETING OF POLITICAL LEADERS THAT ONLY FIVE TO SEVEN THOUSAND TURKS REMAINED IN THE GREEK REGION OF CYPRUS; THE REST HAD MOVED TO THE NORTH. IRMAK WAS ALSO REPORTED TO HAVE SAID EIGHT TO TEN THOUSAND GREEK CYPRIOTS WOULD BE ADMITTED TO THE NORTHERN SECTOR OF THE ISLAND AND GIVEN WORK IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ANKARA00969
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750040-0085
From: ANKARA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750181/aaaacsyb.tel
Line Count: 95
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 ANKARA 898
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 JAN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 JAN 2003 by RicharJA>; APPROVED <12 FEB 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRIMIN IRMAK'S COMMENTS ON AEGEAN AND GOVERNMENT CRISIS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, GR, TU, CY, ICJ
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006